



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Apostle Islands
National Lakeshore

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Raspberry Island Lighthouse Reopens

Apostle Islands National Lakeshore Superintendent Bob Krumenaker is pleased to announce the Monday, June 18, 2007, reopening of Raspberry Island Lighthouse to the public.

Raspberry Island Light Station has been closed to the public for 2 years while a major rehabilitation project was completed. A century of exposure to Lake Superior's harsh environment took its toll on the lighthouse. In order to restore it and ensure its sustainability, the National Park Service initiated a major rehabilitation project in August of 2005. This \$1.3 million project was designed by Bahr, Vermeer & Haecker, Architects, Ltd from Lincoln, Nebraska. It involved a wide variety of tasks including:

- Replacing the roof and repairing the foundation
- Repairing and repainting the interior and exterior walls
- Restoring windows and refinishing doors
- Installing new well, septic and utility systems
- Restoring the tower by repairing glazing, rebuilding railings, repairing the floor and painting the lantern room
- Installing a drainage system and grading the grounds to direct water away from the lighthouse
- Improving existing mechanical, electrical, plumbing and fire protection systems.

KBK Services Inc., of Ashland, Wisconsin was chosen to coordinate this complex project. More than 60 different workers, mostly from northern Wisconsin, worked to return the lighthouse to its

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original glory. Ken Kontny, the project supervisor, noted that this job was a bit different from the projects that KBK normally works on. He described the work on the Raspberry Island lighthouse as a “tribute” to the lighthouse’s rich history and the quality of the workmanship displayed by the 1906 construction crew. The KBK crew took great pride in doing their share to preserve a part of our national heritage at one of what has been called “the nation’s finest collection of historic lighthouses”. Great efforts were made to restore historic fabric rather than to replace it. All of the modern systems are high-efficiency and low energy, and so the entire project is an excellent example to true “sustainability”.

From 1863 through 1947, Raspberry Island lighthouse was home to keepers and their families: men, women, and children who led lives of loneliness and drama in a setting of unparalleled natural beauty. When the doors swing open on June 18th the public will have the opportunity to experience the lighthouse as it may have appeared to keeper Lee Benton in the early 1920s. The head lighthouse keeper’s quarters will be refurnished with period pieces that were either donated by the public or purchased with donated dollars. The assistant lighthouse keepers’ quarters will house National Park Service staff.

Tours of the head lighthouse keeper’s quarters and the lighthouse tower will be offered on a daily basis between 9 am and 4 pm from June 18 until late September. The cost for guided tours at Raspberry Island is \$3 per individual or \$8 per family. The family rate includes immediate family members only (parents with children under age 18). Fee revenue collected at Apostle Islands National Lakeshore will stay in the park and be used for critical and highly visible projects that will benefit the public.

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